OUT OF SIGHT

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PICTURING THE UNSEEN
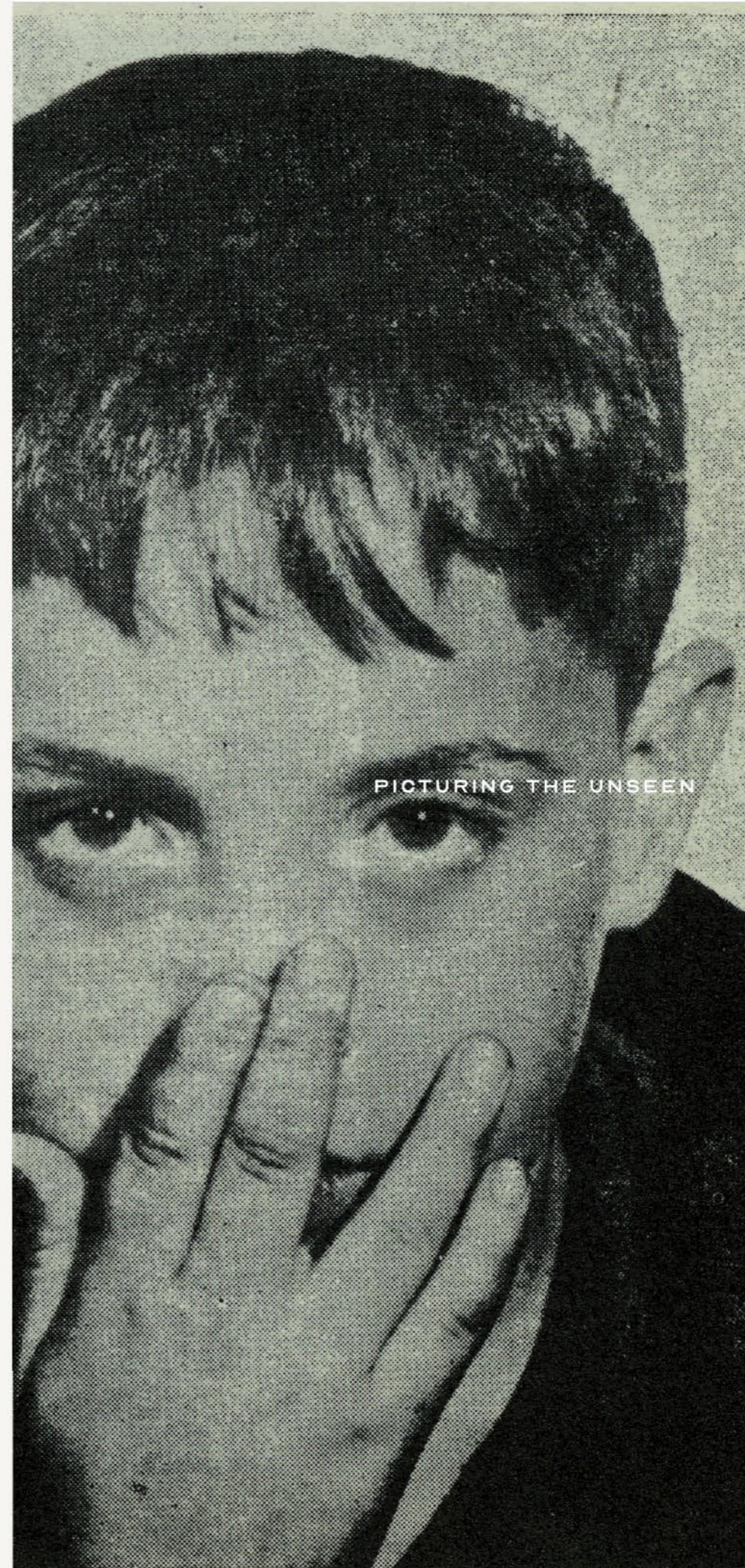
CIHAD CANER

RÓISÍN WHITE

SINEAD KENNEDY

AGATA WIECZOREK

CURATED BY

LEXINGTON DAVIS

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Photo: **Agata Wieczorek**

SEEING THROUGH, SEEING WITH
LEXINGTON DAVIS

*"I am invisible, understand, simply because
people refuse to see me,"*

states the nameless black narrator in Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel *Invisible Man*, who recounts his struggle for agency and acknowledgement in the highly racialized United States. "When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me."[1] He relates his story from the basement of the whites-only building where he lives clandestinely, hidden from view but insistently present, embodying the buried conscience of those living above him. He reminds us that invisibility is not a fixed state of being, but rather a condition actively and systemically imposed on those considered "Other." The unseen is thus not something (or someone) we *cannot* see, but rather something (or someone) we *refuse* to see, look through, reimagine, ignore, and forget.

The cultural production of the "Other" depends heavily on representational practices that transform subjects into images or texts. This process is never neutral. The same structures of power that operate in society are frequently reproduced and reinforced in the media, whether consciously or unconsciously. It is not only a question of *who* is represented and *how*, but also *by whom*. Judith Butler acknowledges this when she reminds us "to consider what forms of social and state power are 'embedded' in the frame."[2] Butler's argument could be extended beyond photography's physical frame to many forms of representational media, including video and computer-generated imagery.

Visual media possess a powerful ability to create subjects and define norms, a fact recognized by many lens-based artists working in cultural climates where conversations about representation and identity have become central to public discourse. The exhibition *Out of Sight: Picturing the Unseen* highlights new work by four emerging interdisciplinary artists who question and explore the fraught relationship between visibility and the construction of "Otherness." They approach the unseen as a process—an "unseeing"—in which certain groups of people are systematically erased, silenced, sidelined, and recreated according to the needs of a dominant culture. They ask *who* remains unseen, particularly in the West, and how privilege directly influences one's access to tools of self-representation.

In their work, "out of sight" functions as both a social position and a physical place. Cihad Caner and Róisín White critically examine how "Othered" subjects have been routinely reimagined as monsters and fairy changelings—invisible threats that serve to dehumanize individuals deemed different by the societies in which they live. Sinead Kennedy reveals how migrant detention centers are purposely concealed and difficult to access, while Agata Wieczorek approaches the factory as a site of unseen, gendered labor. The exhibition's subtitle "picturing the unseen" likewise carries multiple meanings, as it refers to "picturing" in the sense of both imagining and image making, each of which has lasting social and political effects. Through photographic and video works, the included artists show us how visibility is continually negotiated through discourse, folklore, governmental policies, and the production and consumption of goods. They mine local histories, draw from critical theory, and engage with diverse communities in order to examine how marginalization operates and persists. Their subjects' bodies emerge as sites where visibility can no longer be denied or suppressed. They show us that "unseeing" is not only a reductive act of erasure, but is also productive, leading to the creation of myths, narratives, alternative communities, different temporalities, and physical structures of confinement and survival.

For his work *Demonst(e)rating the Untamable Monster*, Cihad Caner used motion capture technology to create computer-generated animated monsters, who speak and sing to each other in a two-channel video installation. He made the work in response to the mainstream media's persistent characterization of those considered "Other" as "monstrous." Interested in language's subject-producing power, he traced the etymology of the word "monster" and found that the Latin verb—*monstrare*—means to demonstrate, while its noun—*monstrum*—refers to a divine omen or warning. The word thus possesses a deeply rooted connection to practices of signification, and so it seems apt that the monster has proven such an enduring and meaningful symbol across different cultures. An object of fantasy, the monster is understood and produced through the fear of that which is unknown and originates from outside. "Monsters provoke us to break down our built-in categories and rethink," states one of Caner's unnamed beasts.[3] They are the aliens that dispute the unalienable. Because monsters can never truly be seen, their bodies remain immaterial, horrifyingly boundless and unfixed.

Perhaps this is why the physicality of Caner's monsters is so striking and, at times, humorous. Scarred and pockmarked, with sagging, wrinkled skin, they seem strangely human, which essentially they are. The artist created them by digitally recording the movement and expressions of performers—including himself—which he then animated. By using motion capture, Caner effectively preserves the indexical; beneath the layers of computer-generated imagery are actual human faces, forcing us to question the many ways that multidimensional subjects are reduced to caricatures. The artist is specifically interested in exploring the experience of inhabiting migrant, female, and queer bodies, and the three performers thus identify with these groups. Caner draws from his own experiences as a Turkish national living in the Netherlands, where the sizeable Turkish community is frequently targeted by right-wing politicians and subjected to microaggressions on a daily basis. Through his monsters, Caner critically reflects on how stereotypes are generated, and is particularly interested in their relation to image and text production, as he points out that the word "stereotype" originally referred to the metal plate used to make prints.

Caner's work also considers the exclusionary potential of language, particularly for those who are non-native speakers. He draws from Jacques Derrida's writings on hospitality, in which the author argues that the foreigner's obligation to communicate in a language that is not their own represents "the first act of violence" against them.[4] This could be a reason Caner's monsters frequently sing; in song—which is considered by many scholars to be the most primeval and embodied form of speech—universal sounds often take precedence over specific words. The artist further engages with linguistic systems in his collection of clay tablets imprinted with self-created symbols comprising a fictional language of signifiers without signifieds. According to Stuart Hall, "stereotyping…is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order," to which language certainly contributes.[5] With his hieroglyphs, Caner presents an alternative semantic order open to new possibilities for meaning making, unburdened from the baggage of conventions and hierarchies.

Unseen creatures are also a central focus of Róisín White's photographic series *Cross the Child's Palm with Silver*. For this body of work, the artist conducted in-depth research at the Irish National Folklore Archive, where she discovered a trove of stories about changelings, creatures believed to have been left in place of humans who were stolen by fairies. However, it eventually became clear that those most often suspected of being changelings were children with disabilities. Already in 1911 the anthropologist Walter Wentz-Evans conducted a study of living children labeled changelings and discovered that many were so accused "merely because of some bodily deformity or because of some abnormal mental or pathological characteristics capable of an ordinary rational explanation."[6] He noted that such children were often "the objects of systematic cruelty," and "cures" said to return the "healthy" child to their rightful place included subjecting the suspected changeling to beatings, burnings, exposure, poison, and drowning.[7] Adults too were sometimes charged with being changelings, especially those who had mental illnesses or flouted the expectations of a patriarchal society. In certain cases, the changeling myth may have been used to justify mistreatment and even murder, as in the sensational 1895 case surrounding the death of Bridget Cleary, whose killers were convicted only of manslaughter as the judge was convinced they truly believed she was a fairy imposter.

In her installation White mixes original and archival images, resulting in a blurring of fact and fiction that has an unsettling effect. Her experiments with scale encourage us to continually adjust our proximity to the work, and our gaze thus oscillates between one of intimacy and distance. The archival photos often feature noticeable halftone, drawing attention to the images' histories of reproduction and distribution in home medical guides and textbooks. Though the "rational explanations" of the medical community gradually displaced fantasy and superstition, White's work reminds us that photos produced as part of studies and experiments have their own legacy of "Othering" and inflicting violence on those who did not conform to scientific definitions of "normalcy."

In her work, White reveals how the changeling's body became a potential threat to social order and a site for confronting and negotiating difference. Because a person with disabilities or mental illness could indisputably claim membership to a community by virtue of being born into it, the changeling myth became a way to effectively transform them into something originating from outside, an infiltrator stripped of their humanity. Fear of the endemic "Other" was expressed in countless superstitious practices, which White details in her work, from hanging iron above the cradles of newborns to warning the fairies that their homes were aflame in order to trick them into fleeing. Belief in the power of the fairies also impressed itself onto the landscape, as White shows us in her photos of rings of clover and trees believed to belong to "the good folk," which were—and still sometimes are—protected from destruction in order not to anger them. Through her exploration of the changeling myth, the artist reveals how local beliefs have contributed to national history and shaped Irish identity, determining which subjects are denied a place in the larger society.

Sinead Kennedy's photographic and video work likewise considers how national belonging is defined through exclusionary practices. In *treading waters*, she relays the experiences of a group of refugees she befriended over the course of three years, after meeting them while visiting detention centers in her hometown of Melbourne. She was initially struck by how the centers were purposely hidden from the main road and difficult to access; signage was painted over and visiting was highly restricted. At first her work on migration focused on the technologies and bureaucracies that structure the process of seeking asylum, but as she came to know the men at the detention centers better her approach shifted. She began to make work in direct response to their daily lives, in dialogue with them and with their participation and consent.

While most images of refugees in the mainstream media tend to depict moments of great intensity and consequence—such as boats landing on beaches and the devastating separations of family members—Kennedy's work focuses instead on the agonizing boredom, uncertainty, and endless periods of waiting that take place largely out of sight and characterize their everyday reality. She denies us the voyeuristic pleasure of beholding her subjects' faces, and offers instead austere, calculated shots of the objects that feature in their stories. The images' almost clinical aesthetic reflects the cold and dispassionate process of asylum seeking. They illustrate how life in detention breeds alternative, extremely personal temporalities. "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons," wrote T.S. Eliot, a reflection on time that becomes strikingly literal for Kennedy's friend Moorthy*, who made approximately 21,840 cups of tea while in detention, earning him his nickname "more tea."[8] Her accompanying photograph of a sea of white disposable cups attempts to give visual form to that incomprehensibly large number and effectively reinforces the absurdity of a life lived in perennial waiting.

Kennedy began using video in order to experiment with time as a medium, and to incorporate the physical presence and voices of the men into her work. In direct contrast to the immobility the asylum process imposes on refugees, she depicts her subjects in continuous motion. They perform monotonous, repetitive actions that poetically symbolize their current situation: Rujul pours tea back and forth between two cups. Vijee walks in place in a nondescript hall. Farhan, a bricklayer, methodically constructs a wall as he discusses his life and his hopes for the future over narration in his native Dari dialect. "I am the only person from my boat who hasn't received permanent residency," he says. "I don't know why."[9] This uncertainty has become a perpetual state of being for asylum seekers like Farhan, who receive few answers and justifications from Australia's conservative government. Like many Western countries, Australia eagerly reaps the economic benefits of a globalizing world while closing itself off to the waves of refugees for whom migration is their only chance of escaping persecution. However, by shutting men like Farhan, Vijee, Rujul, and Moorthy away in purposely remote detention centers, the government practices a policy of erasure that is itself oppressive and dehumanizing.

Agata Wieczorek also explores how increased globalization and interconnectivity do not necessarily lead to equal access and visibility in her dual photo series *Beauty Makers* and *Fetish of the Image*, which portray the producers and consumers of silicon female body masks. The two sets of photos are markedly different, both aesthetically and in the way they position their subjects. In her photos of the Roanyer factory in Xuzhou, China, Wieczorek depicts a predominately female workforce as they produce costly skin suits for an overwhelmingly male-identifying international clientele. The employees do not look at the camera, and are instead immersed in their daily tasks: trimming, sewing, airbrushing, and compiling the suits. The images of the maskers are, in contrast, highly performative and carefully posed. Unlike the factory workers, they stare directly into the lens of the camera, demanding the viewer's gaze. Though the maskers rarely wear their suits in public, many of them enjoy producing and sharing images of themselves dressed in them. Posts on the subreddit r/FemaleMasking are almost exclusively photographs, which other users upvote and comment on.

However, like most fetishes, dressing in silicon skin suits is still widely considered taboo. The community of enthusiasts is thus pushed out of sight, to the privacy of their homes or online safe spaces. Though the maskers' desires are socially marginalized, economically these desires are seen as a source of revenue and thus a specific market has emerged to fulfill them. Reflecting on the relationship between neoliberalism and LGBTQ commodity culture, Ann Pellegrini wonders: "Might these consuming subjects also queer capitalism?"[10] But what does queering capitalism mean when expensive commodities are produced by an unseen "Third World" workforce and purchased by comparatively privileged Western consumers? Marina Gržinić argues that "global capitalism functions not with division but with *entanglement*," implicating and involving everything and everyone.[11] According to her, this actively "conceals the global post-Fordist division of labor, which can be best described as an international division of racialized labor between the first, second, and third worlds."[12] As the margins are increasingly blurred, marginalization becomes harder to qualify and protest. Difference is adopted a marketing strategy, and queer desires are swiftly commoditized.

After all, what connects the people in these two sets of images other than the commodities exchanged between them? In photos of the factory workers, the women handle the suits with care, but indifference. For the maskers, however, they are sources of empowerment, the means through which they enter and literally embody the "Other." But as the majority of maskers identify as heterosexual men in their daily lives, they do not have to experience the real consequences that come with living as a woman, including lower wages, limited opportunities, and gender-based violence. The human "Other"—the flesh-and-blood woman producing the suits—remains distant and unknown.

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The four artists included in this exhibition come from diverse backgrounds and work with vastly different subjects and communities. However, their work all shares a commitment to re-centering marginalized groups who have been repeatedly de-centered and rendered invisible. They do not attempt to speak for their subjects, but instead provide a context and framework through which the experiences of those who lack visibility can be acknowledged and confronted. Each artist critically examines the powerful and lasting effects of policies and cultural norms that cast aside certain people and treat difference as deviance. In a recent article, Achille Mbembe reflects on the complexities of belonging in today's deeply divisive "societies of enmity," speculating:

> Perhaps it has always been this way. Perhaps democracies have always constituted communities of kindred folk, societies of separation based on identity and on an exclusion of difference. It could be that they have always had slaves, a set of people who, for whatever reason, are regarded as foreigners, members of a surplus population, undesirables whom one hopes to be rid of, and who, as such, must be left 'completely or partially without rights'. This is possible.[13]

Yet it is the job of the artist to imagine alternative possibilities—to encourage audiences to see differently, and more expansively and inclusively. For Caner, White, Kennedy, and Wieczorek, art is not just about showing or depicting, but *making visible*, a radical act with political impact.

After a lifetime of being ignored and seen through, Ellison's invisible man asks: "But to whom can I be responsible, and why should I be, when you refuse to see me?"[14] The artists in *Out of Sight: Picturing the Unseen* respond to this question by taking this responsibility on themselves—by opening their eyes and refusing to look away.

1 Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (London: Penguin Modern Classics, 2011 [1952]), 3.

2 Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso Books, 2009), 72.

3 Quoted in Cihad Caner, *Demonst(e)rating the Untamable Monster*, 2018-19.

4 Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press 2000), 15.

5 Stuart Hall, "The Spectacle of the 'Other'" in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications & Open University, 1997), 258.

6 Walter Evans-Wentz, *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* (1911, Project Gutenberg, 2011), http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/34853, 440.

7 Ibid., 150.

8 T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" in The *Waste Land and Other Poems* (London: Faber & Faber 2002), 7.

9 Quoted in Sinead Kennedy, *treading water*, 2019.

10 Ann Pellegrini, "Consuming Lifestyle: Commodity Capitalism and Transformations in Gay Identity" in *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press 2002), 135.

11 Marina Gržinić, *Necropolitics, Racialization, and Global Capitalism* (London: Lexington Books 2014), 85. Emphasis is the author's.

12 Marina Gržinić, "From Biopolitics to Necropolitics: Marina Gržinić in conversation with Maja and Reuben Fowkes," interview by Maja and Reuben Fowkes, ARTMargins Online, October 9, 2019, https://https://artmargins.com/from-biopolitics-to-necropolitics-marina-grini-in-conversation-with-maja-and-reuben-fowkes//2H4PJ2e.

13 Achille Mbembe, "The society of enmity," *Radical Philosophy*, no. 200 (November/December 2016), https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/the-society-of-enmity.

14 Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 14.

*All of the men are referred to with pseudonyms of their own choosing.

UNSEEN FUTURES: ME, THE "OTHER," AND THE OTHERWISE
SEPIDEH RAHAA

Look	نگاه کن
Look how it sings	نگاه کن که چگونه آوازه خوان
Fearless yet calm	بی واهمه، آرام و روان
Sitting at the edge of this habitat	نشینذ بر لب این بوم
Not to remember it	نه آن را به خاطر
And not that we can forget it	و نه از آن توان گذر داریم
A stranger,	غریب
But fearless	اما بی هراس
If it chooses to be here	اگر گزیند که بر لب طاقۀ انتظار نشیند
You are not able to prevent it	نه توان بازداری
Not having the courage or wish	نه اراده یا حتی فرجامی
Does anyone know	کس شناسد آیا
If there is anything freer than the migrant bird?	آزادتر ز مرغ مهاجر؟
In reaching the checkpoint	در رسیدن به ایست بازرسی
Passing the border	در عبور از مرز
It is not only in your head	نه اینکه تمام ادعای شده و ذهن توست
Unlike what others would imagine	خلاف تصور همگان
Holding your breath	حبس میکنی نفست را درون سینه
Counting from one to ten...	میشمری از یک تا ده...
Staring at floor	زل منفی به زمین
Down there	رو به پایین
On the cracks between the tiles	درست آنجا، بین ترک های میان کاشی ها
The truth	حقیقت محض
Is not imaginary or an illusion	نه یک تصور یا که توهم
Your presence is real.	حضور تو، واقعی است

In leaving our homes and moving to Europe, there was no welcoming!

Though this text was written in scattered pieces and fragments, I hope that it will have meaning for those who have followed a similar path while trying to make sense of discussions surrounding "Otherness" in the West, or to those who simply want to know more.[2] For I have seen firsthand how dislocation, relocation, and recontextualization often result in the loss of meaning.

What does it mean to be a member of a marginalized, displaced people, or to count oneself among those whose presence is physically overlooked, intellectually disapproved of, and overdetermined by stereotypical and symptomatic modes? It all starts with a sense of loss without the hope of being (re)united with that which one has been deprived of physically, mentally, or intellectually. This loss is compounded by the exhaustion of leaving and arriving, but rarely settling. Everything that surrounds a displaced person has impact on this sense of loss. However, reflecting on the feeling of loss of a place—its geography, its memories, and its people—may engender a new condition. This feeling of loss can become a generative condition; it can effectively produce new forms of meaning, particularly when one becomes actively involved in their new locality. By entering into situations, one may alter them, and this involvement may lead to changing perceptions.

The question of the "Other" in this context is the question of the West in relation to its past and present, to its epistemology and strategies of dealing with other peoples and geographies throughout hundreds of years of colonizing and holding power over them. Therefore, the position of the "Other" cannot be thoroughly understood or decolonized without an in-depth investigation into its relation to the world's power structures, geographies, politics, and to the socio-cultural structures of the States in which people live. That is because this relationality creates the "condition of decentering."[3]

Attempts to answer the question "Who is unseen, particularly in the West?" reveal that "invisibility" is a condition imposed on marginalized peoples by normalized colonial structures and institutions. One *is* not invisible but *becomes* invisible by force, as so-called invisibility is a distinctive position that is imposed through the highlighting of differences. Western hegemonic epistemology is constructed by and deeply invested in associations based on difference rather than similarity. Western ideology and thinking are built upon differentiating oneself, one's culture, and one's nation against monolithic "Others"—the so-called "Asians," "Africans," "Latin Americans," and so on. This "epistemic racism"—which bleeds into social, intellectual, and institutional spheres, hidden beneath the normalization of certain ways of being and thinking—produces "Eurocentric" knowledge. Racism is not only the devaluing and dehumanizing of certain people by forcibly stripping away their humanity, but is also the "naturalization" of Western ways of thinking and being. It is the glory and joy of classifying without being classified. The position of the "Other" is deeply rooted in this process of classification and categorization, where categories related to race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability, among others, reinforce the binaries of privileged and underprivileged, insider and outsider, visible and invisible. The West enjoys (and economically benefits from) imposing its hegemony and normalized modes of being and thinking on others.

Parallel to that, we—the "Others"—also have a world, a "contemporary world," where post-colonialism and its conditions can function as a productive point of departure. Instead of finding a place to recover from our losses and heal, we are searching for an elsewhere, somewhere we can live as ourselves and envision a possible future characterized by other ways of being and of sharing power. A future in which living and being are real co-existential conditions. In fact, the urge to "picture unseen futures" can inform our present reality and daily lived experience.

To be "Other" is not an end, but an opportunity to practice new modes of being and thinking. To be "Other" is to transform the everyday through a resistance against conformity, and all the contrived identities and conditions that conformity imposes. According to Stuart Hall, the most important thing is "what one might become," rather than what one is or where one comes from—identities that are defined through predetermined categories.[4] An identity based on becoming creates the possibility to monitor and contemplate life on both sides of the border separating inside from outside. It also allows us to:

· Complicate concepts instead of being limited to simplified definitions
· Defy narrow assumptions about identity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability
· Embrace the interdependency and relationality of the world
· Continue to exist in non-Western contexts while living in West and outside of its borders

As one who sees from both within and outside, the "Other" must "delink from the disciplinarity" of imposed positions, the "geopolitics of knowledge," and "normativity."[5] "Delinking implies disobedience"; by delinking, one breaks free from structures that have negatively impacted generations of people, structures whose effects continue to be felt into the present.[6] Delinking demands self-awareness, persistence, and determination in consciously seeking for new alliances. Delinking requires acceptance of oneself as a point of departure; it is certainly not easy to move beyond the state of life-long limbo that has become the normal mode of living for many "Othered" peoples. Delinking enables us to come up with alternative visions of reality more rooted in the lived experiences of people around the globe, an approach which allows meaning to be generated from within.

Through art and its mediation we should reach out to other people by first looking into ourselves and into the depth of our condition. By doing so, we can facilitate more compassionate forms of interaction by remaining open to contingency. This creates a space for more direct and non-hierarchical connections to take place between people. In imagining a different future, we must create alternative physical and mental spaces and make room for greater closeness and proximity to the (non-Western) world and to each other.

1 Walter Mignolo, "Foreward" in *Can Non-Europeans Think?* by Hamid Dabashi (London: Zed Books Ltd. 2015), xv.

2 In this essay, the "West" refers to a white racial position, and particularly refers to the white West.

3 See Simon Ceder, *Cutting Through Water: Towards a Posthuman Theory of Educational Relationality*, doctoral dissertation, Lund University, Sweden, 2016.

4 Stuart Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora in Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory: A Reader*, eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994), 222.

5 Mignolo, "Foreword," xii.

6 Ibid., xii.

Demonst(e)rating the Untamable Monster,
2018-19

Caner's installation *Demonst(e)rating
the Untamable Monster* arose from his
realization that mainstream media outlets
frequently frame those they consider
"Other" as "monstrous." In response,
he constructed literal monsters whose
moving philosophical and poetic discussion
about alienation strikingly contrasts with
their grotesque features, sometimes to a
humorous effect. To create these creatures,
Caner used motion-capture technology,
meaning that real human bodies (including
his own) are always present underneath
the layers of computer-generated imagery.
The work also addresses language's
exclusionary potential, which the artist
contests in his installation of clay tablets
inscribed with self-created hieroglyphs.
Together, they form a fictional language
open to new possibilities for meaning
making, and free from cultural associations
and hierarchies. Through this varied body
of work, Caner demonstrates how harmful
stereotypes reproduced by the popular
media deepen the divide between a given
society and those it identifies
as its outsiders.

CIHAD CANER

Oh my dear monster.

Canavara
misafirperver
hale
gelebilir miyiz?
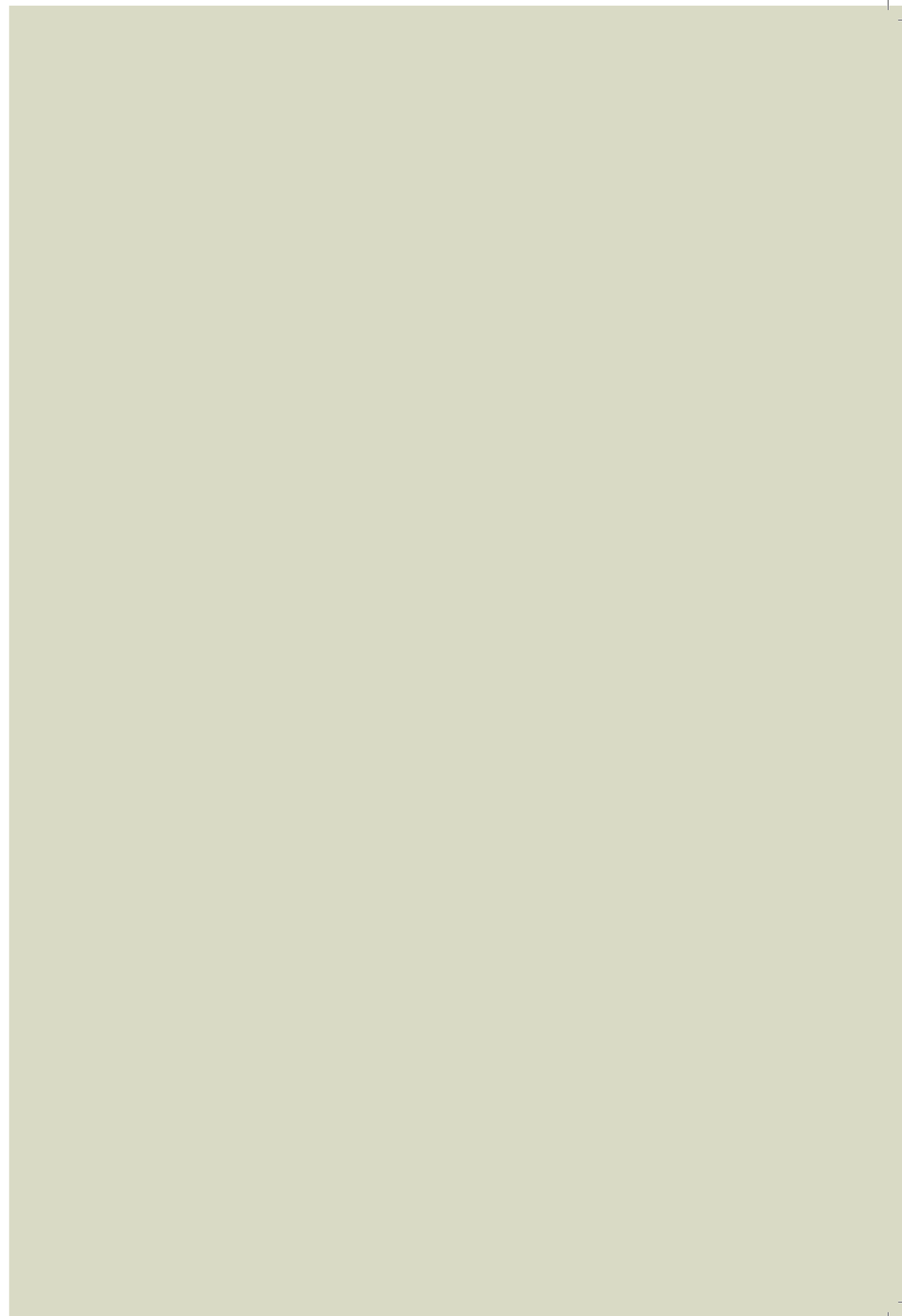
Can we become hospitable to the monster?

The revolution is only for monsters.


Who is authorized to speak on behalf of whom?

The Monster's body is a political claim in itself.

Cross the Child's Palm with Silver, 2019

White's series *Cross the Child's Palm with Silver* is based on the artist's extensive research in the Irish National Folklore Archive, where she discovered countless stories about changelings—sinister creatures believed to have been left in place of humans stolen by the fairies. However, children with disabilities were those most commonly accused of being changelings, and "cures" said to return the missing "healthy" child to its family frequently involved abuse and, occasionally, murder. The changeling myth became a way of stripping people with disabilities and mental illnesses of their humanity, transforming them into members of an invisible race of devious creatures. Mixing original photographs with archival images, the artist blurs the boundary between fact and fiction and reveals how the cultural effects of the changeling legend spill into the present through enduring narratives and superstitious practices.
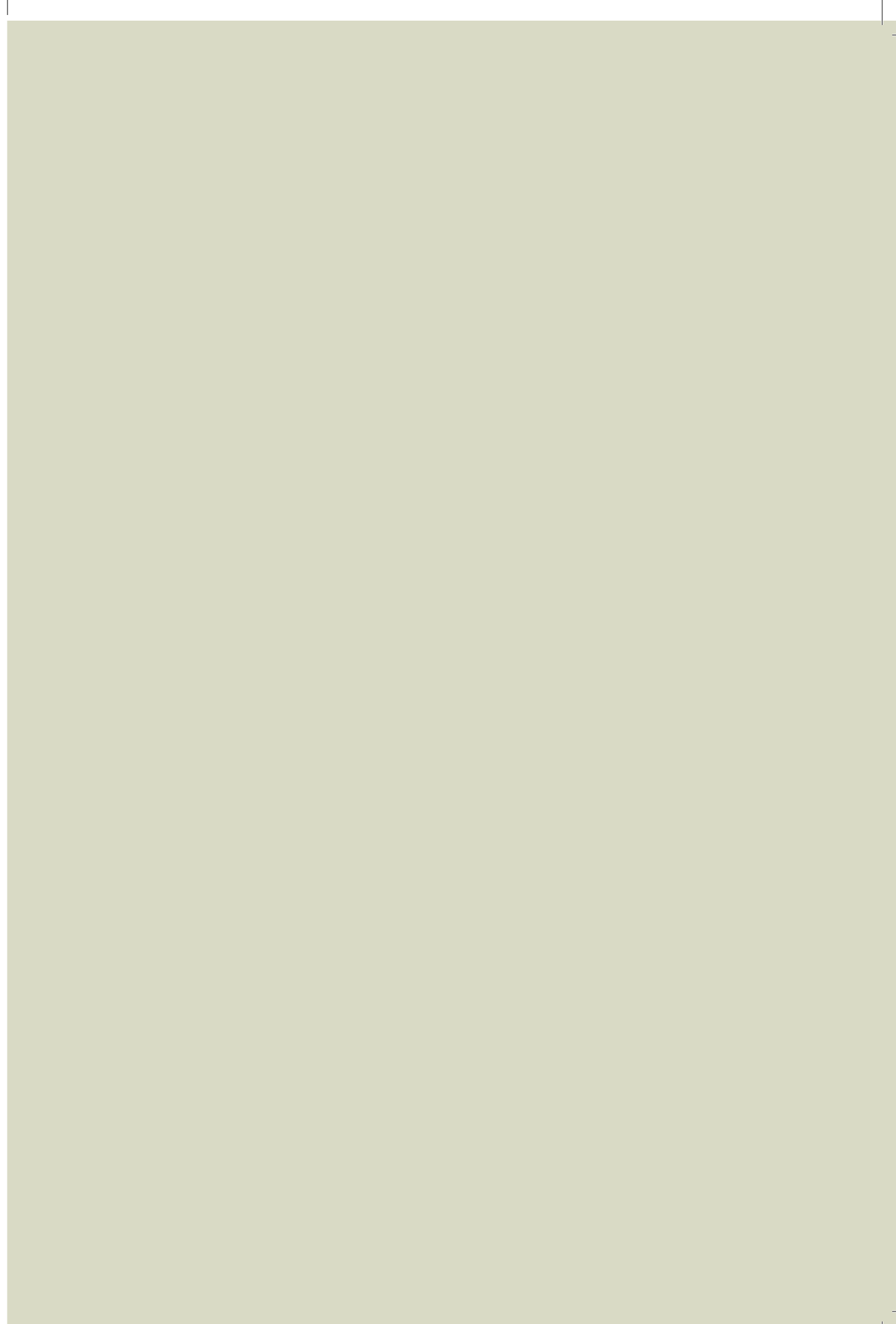
RÓISÍN WHITE
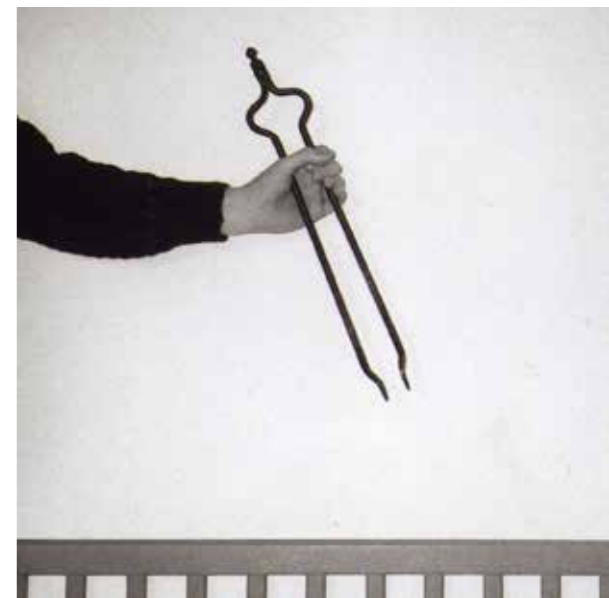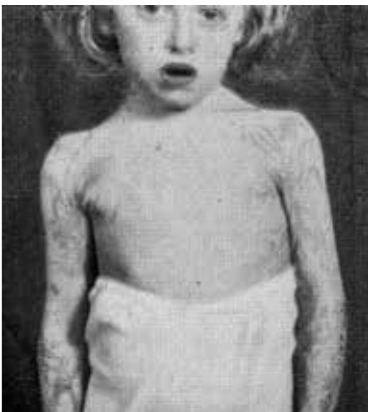
treading water, 2018-19

The video and photographic works that comprise Kennedy's series *treading water* grew out of the artist's years-long friendships with several asylum seekers residing in her hometown of Melbourne. She noticed that the detention center where she met them is purposely inaccessible and hidden from view, which inspired her to explore how the restrictions and circumstances imposed on refugees render them socially invisible. While images of asylum seekers in the mainstream media frequently depict moments of crisis and consequence—such as the arrival of boats on beaches and devastating family separations—Kennedy's work focuses instead on the agonizing boredom, uncertainty, and endless periods of waiting that take place primarily out of sight. She depicts how life in detention breeds alternative, extremely personal temporalities that are defined through mundane activities such as brewing tea or laying bricks. Though seemingly banal, these actions become a primary means for refugees to assert their humanity in the face of oppressive governmental policies.

SINEAD KENNEDY

Signage for Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre removed
and painted over while the center was in operation.

Moorthy was recognized as a refugee in 2011 but never received a visa. His nickname in the detention center was "more tea," because he would make everyone tea during the visits. He made approximately 21,840 cups of tea during his time in detention.

Rujul and his son Deeran first met when Deeran was four.
They were able to spend thirteen days together.

AGATA WIECZOREK

Fetish of the Image, 2018-19
& *Beauty Makers,* 2018

Wieczorek's two connected photo series
Fetish of the Image and *Beauty Makers*
examine the mostly unseen global
economy surrounding the production and
consumption of silicon female body masks.
Performative, carefully posed images of the
(predominantly male-identifying) maskers
contrast with subdued, documentary-style
shots of the female workers who create
these costly fetish items at a factory in
Xuzhou, China. Though many maskers
enjoy producing and sharing photographs
of themselves dressed in the suits, their
lifestyle is still widely considered taboo,
and their activities are thus generally
consigned to private safe spaces. However,
the factory workers likewise remain
largely invisible, reminding us that
most of what is consumed in the West
is produced out of sight in the "Third
World." Though increased globalization
and interconnectivity have enabled new
markets to form around queer desires,
commodities continue to be the primary
connectors between people of vastly
different backgrounds and privilege levels.

CIHAD CANER (1990, TR/NL)

is an artist living and working in Rotterdam and Istanbul, who works primarily with photography, video, CGI, and sculpture. Recent work focuses on image culture; portrayals of the "other"; the utilization of objects in daily life; and the ways people face circumstances such as war, resistance, and immigration. Recently he has exhibited at V2_Lab for the Unstable Media, Rotterdam; Hong Kong Arts Center; Art Museum of Nanjing University of the Arts; the National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavík; Galerie BOHAI, Hannover; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Corridor Project Space, Amsterdam; Blitz, Valetta; and EYE Filmmuseum, Amsterdam. Caner was recently in residence at ARCUS Project in Japan and received a Mondriaan Fonds Jong Talent grant in 2018. He holds a Masters in Media Design and Communication from Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam.

RÓISÍN WHITE (1992, IE)

is a visual artist based in Dublin who works primarily with photography, while incorporating drawing, sculpture, and collage into her practice. Her work draws from archival materials and seeks to create a dialogue with our forgotten histories through the use of found photography and ephemera. She has an interest in exploring lore and the fictional narrative that can be discovered in discarded imagery. White has exhibited her work in Ireland and across Europe, most recently at the Elizabeth Fort in Cork and The Darkroom in Dublin. Her project *Lay Her Down Upon Her Back* was selected for the third edition of New Irish Works in 2019 and will be showcased at the Museum of Contemporary Photography project during the PhotoIreland Festival in July 2019. She was recently in residence at the BLOW Fuse Photobook Programme, Dublin; The Darkroom, Dublin; In-Between Shores/Ardesia Projects, Daverio; and Cow House Studios, Wexford.

SINEAD KENNEDY (1993, AU)

is an artist based in Melbourne. Her practice is guided by an interest in photography and social issues, and has recently focused on the politics of migration and asylum in an Australian context. She explores expanded documentary as a mode of visual storytelling. Kennedy completed her Bachelor of Photography at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Her work has been exhibited at the Pingyao International Photography Festival; HeadOn Festival, Sydney; and Organ Vida International Photography Festival, Zagreb. She was the recipient of the 2017 Pool Collective Grant and won second prize in PHmuseum's Women Photographers Grant 2018.

AGATA WIECZOREK (1992, PL)

is based in Lodz, where she is currently completing her Masters at the National Film School. She previously graduated with honors from Strzeminski Art Academy in Lodz, where she studied graphic arts and painting. Wieczorek's practice combines film, photography, and animation. She incorporates both documentary and studio-based approaches. For her work, she often enters hermetic environments and works with socially marginalized groups in order to explore uncommon understandings of identity, self, and gender. Her work has been exhibited and awarded internationally, including at Obscura Festival of Photography, Penang (finalist); Warsaw Photo Days (Grand Prix); Organ Vida International Photography Festival, Zagreb; and GESTE Paris; among others. Alongside her artistic practice, she is also a writer and contributor for *Lynx Contemporary*.

LEXINGTON DAVIS (1992, US/NL)

is a curator based in Amsterdam, where she is completing a Masters in Critical Studies in Art & Culture at the Vrije Universiteit. She has held positions at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and has contributed to programming at the Centre Pompidou, Paris and Kulturhuset, Stockholm. Her academic and curatorial work has been supported by a Fulbright scholarship, a Vrije Universiteit Fellowship, the Austrian Federal Chancellery, and the Culture Department of the Styrian Provincial Government.

SEPIDEH RAHAA (1981, IR/FI)

is a multidisciplinary artist, educator, and researcher based in Helsinki. Through her practice, she questions social norms and conventions while focusing on womanhood and resistance, (silenced) histories and migration, and the body and representation. Currently she is pursuing her doctoral studies in Contemporary Art at Aalto University, focusing on identity and hybridity with a critical and analytic view on representation and image production. Rahaa aims to initiate methods within contemporary art for creating spaces for dialogue. Her artistic practice combines different disciplines, including film and video, performance, painting, and photography. Her work has been exhibited and screened in Iran, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Germany, and Finland.

PARALLEL - EUROPEAN PHOTO BASED PLATFORM

Fluid in its nature and purpose, contemporary photography remains an ever-evolving discipline of discovery and exploration, walking along the lines of definitions. The artists, curators and members of **PARALLEL** fully embrace this challenge - their hybrid approach to the core elements of photography, light and time, challenges us to take part in redefining the artistic, cultural and social value of contemporary photography. **PARALLEL** aims to establish an extensive and effective exhibition platform for European new artists and curators and promote a fluent and functional link between them and exhibitors (museums, galleries and festivals). Created in 2017, **PARALLEL** brings together 18 creative European organisations from 16 countries, committed to fostering cross-cultural exchanges and mentorships in order to set new standards in contemporary photography. The large and diverse nature of this network ensures a wide geographical spread and a fertile ground for fostering new dialogues, sparking fresh ideas and helping to boost creativity. The work process is implemented as a two-phase process: Creative Guidance: selection, tutoring, peer learning and curatorship for new creators; Exhibition Platform: a wide exhibition network engaging exhibitors, universities and art schools.

PARALLEL is supported by the **Creative Europe Program**, designed and lead by **Procur.arte**, a Lisbon based cultural association.

www.parallelplatform.org

PARALLEL MEMBERS

Procurarte Lisbon, Portugal (Project Leader)   **Le Château D'eau** Toulouse, France   **The Finnish Museum of Photography** Helsinki, Finland   **Fondazione Fotografia Modena** Modena, Italy   **Fotofestiwal – Foundation of Visual Education** Lodz, Poland   **Format International Photography Festival – Derby Quad** Derby, Uk   **Galleri Image** Aarhus, Denmark   **Issp** Riga, Latvia   **Katalog – Journal of Photography & Video** Kerteminde, Denmark   **Kaunas Photography Gallery** Kaunas, Lithuania   **Landskrona Foto** Landskrona, Sweden   **Ngo Mystetski Mandry / Odesa Photo Days** Odesa, Ukraine   **Organ Vida** Zagreb, Croatia   **Photoireland** Dublin, Ireland   **Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center** Budapest, Hungary   **Tbilisi Photography & Multimedia Museum** Tbilisi, Georgia   **Ugm – Maribor Art Gallery** Maribor, Slovenia   **Yet Magazine** Lausanne, Switzerland

THE FINNISH MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

The year 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the Finnish Museum of Photography!

The Finnish Museum of Photography is Finland's national specialized museum for photography, which is located in Helsinki. Through exhibitions, collection management, education, research, and a wide range of public and community programs, the museum strives to promote and foster photographic art and culture in Finland. Founded on the initiative of photography organizations, the museum opened its doors in 1969 and is the oldest photography museum in Europe.

The museum's exhibitions cover Finnish and international contemporary photography, as well as the diverse history of the craft. Exhibitions are also produced from, and reinforced by, the museum's own collections. The museum's collections include around 2.5 million pictures spanning various photographic user cultures. The emphasis in new collection acquisitions is on contemporary Finnish photographic art. The archives contain a wide range of documents, from newspaper clippings and sound recordings to films, printed invitations, and posters. The object collection comprises 3,500 items, such as cameras and photographic instruments.

The museum carries out basic research on its collections. The museum maintains a database of Finnish photographers, along with other databases and a photography library for researchers. The conservation unit maintains the museum's collections and disseminates information about the safe preservation of photographs. In a national context, the Finnish Museum of Photography has considerable specialist expertise in the preservation and conservation of photographs.

The museum's Engagement and Learning Programme aims to foster an increased awareness and understanding of photography and visual culture within society by creating innovative and inclusive opportunities for people to engage with the museum's exhibitions and programs, both as audience members and participants. It also seeks to create opportunities for meaningful exchanges between artists and the public.

www.valokuvataiteenmuseo.fi

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